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REMARKS

Claims 29-57 were pending in this application. These claims have been replaced by new Claims 58-80.

In the Final Rejection, Claims 49, 50 and 52 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being clearly anticipated by, or in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over the EP Patent 0 299 459 A2. In view of the cancellation of these claims, this rejection is now moot.

This rejection should not be raised against new Claims 58-80, because nothing in EP Patent 0 299 459 A2 teaches or suggests the two heating steps of the independent claims presented herein. By virtue of employing the claimed two heating steps, Applicant achieves the claimed void-free seal between the potting resin and the hollow fiber membranes. The cited art neither teaches nor suggests the method of the present invention.

In the Final Rejection, Claims 54, 55 and 57 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yagihashi et al (US 5,885,454) in view of the EP Patent 0 299 459 A2. In view of the cancellation of these claims, this rejection is now moot.

This rejection should not be raised against new Claims 58-80, because nothing in either US Patent No. 5,885,454 or EP Patent 0 299 459 A2, considered alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the two heating steps of the independent claims presented herein. By virtue of employing the claimed two heating steps, Applicant achieves the claimed void-free seal between the potting resin and the hollow fiber membranes. The cited art neither teaches nor suggests the method of the present invention.

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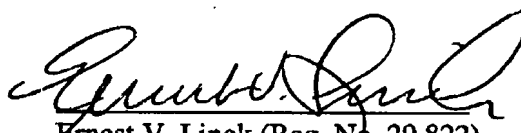
In the Final Rejection, Claims 29-48, 51-53 and 54-56 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Huang et al (US 5,284,584) in view of the EP Patent 0 299 459 A2. In view of the cancellation of these claims, this rejection is now moot.

This rejection should not be raised against new Claims 58-80, because nothing in U.S. Patent No. 5,284,584 or EP Patent 0 299 459 A2, considered alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the two heating steps of the independent claims presented herein. By virtue of employing the claimed two heating steps, Applicant achieves the claimed void-free seal between the potting resin and the hollow fiber membranes. The cited art neither teaches nor suggests the method of the present invention.

FEE AUTHORIZATION

Please charge all fees (revival fee, RCE fee, extra claims, etc.) due in connection with this filing to Deposit Account No. 19-0733.

Respectfully submitted,


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